



AUM sign in Tamil script

Other languages in South Africa

In the Wikipedia (see extract below), we saw that there are many other significant languages used in South Africa.

We saw that the South African Constitution says that the Pan South African Language Board must:

...promote and ensure respect for –

(i) all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa,

including [German](#), [Greek](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Portuguese](#), [Tamil](#), [Telegu](#) and [Urdu](#); and

(ii) [Arabic](#), [Hebrew](#), [Sanskrit](#) and other [languages used for religious purposes](#) in South Africa.

This part of our course is a reminder of the importance of these languages.

Other significant languages spoken in South Africa (Wikipedia)

Other languages spoken in South Africa, though not mentioned in the Constitution, include [Fanagalo](#), [Lobedu](#) ([Khilobedu](#)), [Northern Ndebele](#) ([Sindebele](#)), [Phuthi](#) ([Siphuthi](#)). **Lobedu** has been variously claimed to be a dialect of Northern Sotho and an autonomous language. **Fanagalo** is a [pidgin](#) often used as a mining [lingua franca](#).

Significant numbers of immigrants from [Europe](#), elsewhere in [Africa](#), and the [Indian subcontinent](#) means that a wide variety of other languages can also be found in parts of South Africa. In the older immigrant communities there are: [Greek](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Portuguese](#), [Tamil](#), [Urdu](#), [Yiddish](#), and smaller numbers of Dutch, [French](#) and [German](#) speakers.

These non-official languages may be used in limited semi-official ways where it has been determined that these languages are prevalent. More importantly, these languages have significant local functions in specific communities whose identity is tightly bound around the linguistic and cultural identity that these non-official SA languages signal.

The fastest growing non-official language is Portuguese - first spoken by white, black, and [mulato](#) settlers and refugees from [Angola](#) and [Mozambique](#) after they won independence from [Portugal](#) and now by more recent immigrants from those countries again - and increasingly French, spoken by immigrants and refugees from [Francophone Central Africa](#).

More recently, speakers of [North](#), Central and [West African](#) languages have arrived in South Africa, mostly in the major cities, especially in [Johannesburg](#) and [Pretoria](#), but also [Cape Town](#) and [Durban](#).

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